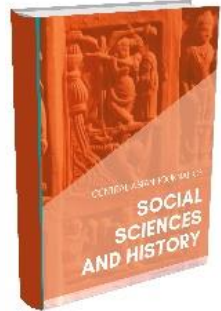




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### Basic Education in Nigeria: Problems and Solutions

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#### ABSTRACT

This paper discussed problems faced by Basic education in Nigeria. The secondary data were sourced from print materials and online resources on basic schools in Nigeria. The paper identified inadequate funding, inadequate infrastructural facilities, inadequate professional teachers, corruption, insecurity problem, poor supervision, poor learning outcome, poor implementation of Basic Education policies. To address these problems, the paper recommended among other things adequate funding of basic education across the federation.

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#### Introduction

The National Policy on Education (2013) defines Basic Education as the education given to children aged 0-15 years. It encompasses the Early Child Care and Development Education (0-4) and 10 years of formal schooling. Early Child Care and Development Education however is segmented into ages 0-4 years, situated in daycare or creches, fully in the hands of the private sector and social development services, whilst ages 5-6 are within the formal education sector. For purposes of policy coordination and monitoring, the Federal Government instituted a Universal Basic Education (UBE), with the following objectives: Developing in the entire citizenry a strong consciousness for education and a strong commitment to its vigorous promotion; the provision of compulsory, free and universal basic education for every Nigerian child of school age; reducing the incidence of drop-out from formal

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school system, through improved relevance, quality and efficiency; catering through appropriate forms of complementary approaches to the promotion of basic education, for the learning needs of young persons who for one reason or another have had to interrupt their schooling; and ensuring the acquisition of the appropriate levels of literacy, numeracy, communicative and life skills, as well as the ethical, moral, security and civic values needed for the laying of a solid foundation for life-long learning. Basic Education, to be provided by Government, shall be compulsory, free, universal and qualitative. It comprises: 1-year of Pre-Primary, primary school and junior secondary school.

Basic education in Nigeria is faced with many challenges (World Bank 2015; World Bank (2017) Ogunode 2020). This paper aimed to discuss the various problems facing Basic education in Nigeria.

### **Problems Faced by Basic Education in Nigeria**

There are many problems facing Basic education in Nigeria. Some of these problems include; inadequate funding, inadequate infrastructural facilities, inadequate professional teachers, corruption, insecurity problem, poor supervision, poor learning outcome, poor implementation of Basic Education policies.

### **Inadequate Funding**

Adequate funding of Basic school education according Ogunode & Nasir (2021) and Ogunode, Chijindu & Jegede (2022) is very critical for effective administration especially in the area of Curriculum implementation. Curriculum implementation at the Basic school education is very expensive because it has the higher school population among all the forms of education. Effective Curriculum implementation require adequate number of professional teachers, infrastructural facilities, instructional materials and other supportive services resources. The provision of these human and materials resources demand huge financial resources annually which is not available in the Country. The annual allocation of the ministry of education in Nigeria is below the UNESCO 26% recommendation in fact Ogunode (2020) and Ogunode & Adanna (2022) observed that allocation to the education Ministry for one decade is below 15% and from this allocation, the Basic education received the least allocation among all the forms of education in Nigeria. The poor funding of education especially that of the Basic education in Nigeria is hindering effective implementation of Basic school Curriculum in Nigeria. Philip & Okoroafor, A.Iro, (2015); Osiesi (2020); Ogunode, Jegede, Ajape (2021) observed that inadequate funding is a problem preventing implementation of primary school education policies in Nigeria. Budgetary allocation for the administration and management of primary school administration is not adequate. The inadequate funding is the problem responsible for the slow development of primary school education in Nigeria. The poor quality of education at the primary school level is as a result of shortage of funds. Majorities of problem facing the primary school educations are as a result of poor funding of the sector. The inadequate professional teachers, shortage of infrastructural facilities, inadequate instructional aid and poor supervision is caused by inadequate funding (Ogunode, Jegede, Ajape 2021). Ogunode, Richard, & Musa, (2021) *did a study that investigated the factors responsible for shortage of funds in the administration of public primary school education in FCT, Nigeria and they discovered that poor budgetary allocation, lack of political-will to implement UNESCO recommendation for education, corruption in the administration of primary school, fall in revenue and demand from other sector of the economy are the problem responsible for shortage of funds in the administration of primary school education and the effects of underfunding primary school education in FCT will result to poor quality of education, shortage of infrastructural facilities, shortage of professional teachers, shortage of instructional resources and poor implementation of primary school policies and programme. Based on the following findings, the study*

recommended that the government should implement the UNESCO 26% budgetary allocation for education in Nigeria and more allocation should be given to the primary school education.

### **Inadequate Infrastructural Facilities**

Ogunode, (2020) stated that another problem facing the administration of primary school education in Nigeria is the challenge of inadequate infrastructural facilities. Ogunode & Stephen (2021) stated that infrastructural facilities include; administrative block, classrooms, libraries, laboratories, ICT centre, tables, desks, black board, white board, water, electricity, internet services and road network. Many Basic education schools in Nigeria do not have adequate infrastructural facilities to deploy for teaching and learning. Ogunode & Stephen (2021) observed that funds allocated for the provision of capital projects, replacement of facilities, repairs and maintenance in many primary schools in the Nigeria ended up been diverted into private account leaving the primary schools to suffer shortage of facilities. The inadequate infrastructural facilities is affecting the administration of the Basic education. In order to ensure infrastructural facility development in the Basic education school across the country. The federal government provided a counterpart grant for basic education.

### **Inadequate Professional Teachers**

World Bank (2015) and Ogunode & Nasir (2021) submitted that shortage of professional teachers is another major factor hindering effective implementation of Basic school Curriculum in Nigeria. The roles of the teachers cannot be replaced when it comes to Curriculum implementation. The teachers are trained to implement the Curriculum with the aid of other instructional materials. The teachers plans the lesson, writes the lesson note, selects the teaching methods best suit the topic, plans and arranges the educational resources needed to deliver the lesson, evaluate the lesson and report the students' performance to school and parents. The place of the professional teachers in the implementation of school Curriculum cannot be overemphasizes'. It is unfortunate that as important as the professional teachers to the implementation of Basic school Curriculum in Nigeria, that professional teachers are not adequate in the Basic schools across the country. The 2018 National Personnel Audit (NPA), conducted by the Universal Basic Education Commission (UBEC), revealed shortage of professional teachers at the early child education, basic education and junior secondary school education. The report furthered disclosed there was a deficit of 135,319 teachers at the Early Childhood Care Development Education, 139,772 deficit in primary schools and 2,446 shortage in Junior Secondary Schools across the nation. Ogunode, (2020) observed that shortage of professional teachers is also a problem facing the administration of basic education in Nigeria. Many primary school in Nigeria do not have adequate professional teachers. Ogunode & Paul (2021) identified Inadequate funding, limited teacher education institutions, corruption, lack of manpower planning, brain-drain and poor motivation were identified as the factors responsible for shortage of professional teachers in the Nigerian educational institutions.

### **Corruption**

Another problem responsible for poor curriculum implementation is corruption in the Basic education (Ogunode & Nasir 2021). Funds provided for programmes that will support effective delivering of Curriculum implementation in Nigerian basic school are mismanaged and looted by some officials within the ministries and agencies of education. Ogunode (2020); Ogunode, Ahmed, Gregory & Abubakar (2020) observed that corruption have penetrated all most all the public institutions in the country in including education. Corruption is one of the major problem facing the educational institutions. Institutional corruption is the problem preventing effective administration of education in Nigeria because funds allocated for provision of infrastructural facilities and services in the management and implementation of educational programme are been diverted by officers or political

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office holder within the institutions. The common forms of corrupting in the Nigerian educational institutions is fund diversion. Corruption on fund diversion have been reported in all the forms of education in Nigeria. Ogunode & Stephen (2021) identified; shortage of funds, inadequate teachers, shortage of infrastructural facilities, poor quality of education, large out of school children, poor capacity development, poor implementation of Basic education policies and increase in the cost of Basic education administration as the effects of corruption on Basic education administration in Nigeria.

### **Insecurity Problem**

World Bank (2017) and Ogunode (2020) submitted that insecurity is one of the major problem facing the administration of primary schools in Nigeria. Effective administration of basic education in Nigeria is frustrated by the insecurity challenges facing the country especially the Northern part of the country. Many Basic schools have been closed down. Educational officers cannot travel to areas where they are supposed to travel to for administrative functions because of insecurity challenges. One of the most insecurity challenge facing the country is the Boko Haram group. The militant group, Boko Haram, has carried out violent attacks in the north-eastern parts of Nigeria. Thousands of Nigerians have been killed, and many more have been forced to flee their homes. Schools have been the primary target of the attacks. Since 2011, Boko Haram, whose name means 'Western Education is Forbidden, has expanded its attacks to the direct target of schools. It has resulted in the killing and abduction of hundreds of teachers and students and the destruction of school buildings and teaching materials. Ogunode, Ahaotu, & Obi-Ezenekwe (2020) identified loss of manpower in educational institutions, poor quality of education, destructions of infrastructural facilities, brain-drain, closure of educational institutions, discouragement of educational pursuit by children, internal displacement of learners, reduction of private investment in education and inadequate funding of education as the impact of insecurity on school administration in Nigeria

### **Poor Supervision**

Ogunode, (2020) and Ogunode, Yahaya & Musa (2022) submitted that the problem of poor school supervision by the respective school administrators have also contributed to the challenge facing the administration of basic schools. Many school administrators do not effectively supervised the basic schools under their watch. The Nigerian government recognized the need to monitor not only the financial management of the school, but also the teaching of students. Educationists at the Ministries of Education both at the federal and the state levels have set up quality control divisions in their respective ministries to ensure that quality education is maintained. It has been established that quality and standard could be maintained in the educational institutions through regular inspection and continuous supervision of instruction in the schools. Supervision and inspection have been identified as very germane to the day-to-day activities of educational institutions (National Open University of Nigeria, 2009). The supervisor assesses and records the performance of teachers, their ability and consistency in carrying out the classroom activities and keeping of high quality records. The activities of supervisors include the following: inspecting, monitoring, rating, assisting, recommending etc. Ogunode, Olatunde-Aiyedun, & Akin-Ibidiran (2021) and Onele & Aja, (2016) concluded in their study that inadequate Supervisors, inadequate supervision materials, insecurity, logistics problem, inadequate funding and poor capacity development of supervisors are the challenges preventing effective supervision of universal basic education programme in Kuje Area Council of FCT.

### **Poor Learning Outcome**

Ogunode, Johnson & Olatunde-Aiyedun, (2022) and Ogunode (2020) observed that the learning

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outcome of most primary school students is poor. School administrators in Nigeria are disturbed by the falling quality of education at the level of the basic schools. World Bank (2017) observed that the quality of basic education, measured in terms of student learning outcomes, is low in Nigeria. According to international standards, children who have completed grade 3 are expected to be fully literate. Yet in Nigeria only 66 percent of public school students can read at least one of three words and 78 percent can add single digits after completing grade 4 (NEDS, 2015). In terms of variation across the States, a test administered to grade 4 pupils as part of the 2013 Service Delivery Indicator (SDI) Survey produced an overall low score of 32 percent, with the two southern states leading the ranking (59 and 54 percent) and the two northern states with significantly lower scores (23 and 20 percent). In addition, pupils in private schools significantly outperformed those in public schools.

### **Poor Implementation of Basic Education Policies**

Ogunode, Jegede, Ajape (2021) observed that educational policies are used to address many problems and issues in the education. Educational policies are used to increase enrolment into educational institutions, it is used to improve quality of education; it is used to ensure improvement in the delivery of educational service. Ogbonnaya (2010) observed that policy is so important, that an organization cannot function effectively without policy, as policy directs the activities and actions of an organization. The Federal Ministry of Education (1993) stated that one reason for policy in education was to equip the educational system with all that is necessary to launch Nigeria into future, (politically, socially, morally and technologically). In order to develop the primary school education in Nigeria and to realize the various objectives, the federal government formulated National Policy on primary school education as contained in section two. To realize the objectives and goals of primary school education in Nigeria, the Nigerian government designed and formulates policies for the administration and management of primary schools in Nigeria. This policy is contained in the National policy on education. Ogunode, Jegede, Ajape (2021) identified inadequate funding, inadequate infrastructural facilities, inadequate professional teachers, corruption, lack of political will, insecurity challenge, political instability, poor governance and management, rapid growth of the Nation's population and rising cost of education as the challenges preventing effective implementation of primary school education policies in Nigeria. Also, Ogunode & Nasir (2021) conclude that inadequate funding, shortage of professional teachers, inadequate infrastructural facilities, shortage of instructional materials, poor supervision, insecurity and corruption were problems affecting implementation of Basic school education curriculum in Nigeria.

### **Solutions**

Based on the problems identified as facing Basic education in Nigeria, the following were suggested:

- 1) Government should increase the funding of Basic education in Nigeria. This will help to develop the basic education.
- 2) Government should provide more infrastructural facilities in all basic school across the country
- 3) Government should employ more professional teachers and deploys them to basic schools across the country.
- 4) The government should establish anti-corruption units in the ministries and agencies of education to help check mate corrupt practices among staff. Regular auditing of commissions, agencies and ministries of education account could help check financial corruption within the system.
- 5) Adequate security should be provided for all the basic schools in the country especially those in the north east-part of Nigeria.

- 6) Basic education is very important to the educational system because it is the foundational education for the children. For the government to achieve the objectives of the Basic education in Nigeria there is need for effective supervision, the various agencies of government established for supervisory functions and inspection has to be reformed and restructure to execute their functions well.
- 7) Adequate security should be provided for all the basic schools in the country especially those in the North east part of Nigeria. The government policy of safe school project should be funded to ensure primary schools are well security for teaching and learning.
- 8) The government should ensure all policies drafted toward developing basic education in Nigeria are fully implemented.

## Conclusion

The paper examined the problems faced by Nigerian Basic education. Inadequate funding, inadequate infrastructural facilities, inadequate professional teachers, corruption, insecurity problem, poor supervision, poor learning outcome, poor implementation of Basic Education policies were identified as the problems facing Basic education in Nigeria. To solve the problems, adequate funding, employment of professional teachers, provision of more infrastructure facilities, effective supervision, elimination of corruption in administration of Basic education, implementation of Basic education policies and laws and provision of adequate security in Basic schools were recommended.

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